

Skateboarder  
finds 'harmony'  
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# BR BIBLICAL RECORDER

APRIL 13, 2013 • News Journal of North Carolina Baptists • VOLUME 179 NO. 8 • **BRnow.org**

## AUTISMA AWARENESS

Church reaches out to  
community through special  
needs ministry

By SHAWN HENDRICKS | BR Managing Editor

**M**isty Brown

once wondered

if she'd ever be able to go to  
church with her husband and  
two children, as a family, again.

Brown and her husband Daniel have  
an 8-year-old son, Colby, who has autism.

The couple struggled to find a church where their  
son was able to adjust. For a while they rotated Sun-  
days. One of them would stay home with Colby. The other par-  
ent attended church with their daughter Zoe, who is 10.

See Autism page 7

Image from *bigstockphoto.com*  
Photo illustration by Carly Conley

## Collegians on spring break tackle Sandy challenge

BR staff and Baptist Press

**H**elping rip out walls and floors infested with  
mold and damaged by mud and water isn't the  
most fun Mollie Jones has had during a spring  
break, but probably the most rewarding.

The sophomore from Appalachian State University  
in Boone was one of hundreds of college students who  
gave up a week of sleeping late to work with North Car-  
olina Baptist Men and other Southern Baptist disaster  
relief teams. In recent weeks students have helped Hur-  
ricane Sandy victims rebuild and reclaim their homes  
in Allenwood, N.J. and in other areas of the Northeast  
damaged by the "superstorm."

"It definitely wasn't like most people's spring breaks,  
sleeping on the floor and taking cold showers and  
working all day," said Jones, a member of First Baptist  
Church, Hickory.

"I don't think people realize how bad it is in New  
Jersey. It's been four or five months, and it doesn't look  
like anything has changed."

While students have helped N.C. Baptist Men com-  
plete around 60 projects since December, more than 700  
remain. During the week of March 11-17 Jones helped  
do her part, which included consoling one family who  
learned most of their house was infested with black  
mold and needs to be rebuilt.

"I think they were in shock a little bit ... because they  
didn't really realize how bad their house was," she said.

"They were living there hoping they would be OK.  
One of the sons was really sick because of the mold he  
was living in. ... It was an emotional day."

Another day included prying loose a board that had

See Break page 16



Christen Dierken, 24, pulls up mold-infested flooring from a home  
on Staten Island, N.Y. Dierken, a graduate student at the University  
of the Cumberland, worked long days with her team. "We just kept  
going because we knew it was for God's purpose," said Dierken,  
who helped lead the team with her husband. (Photo by Laura Sikes)



# Girls need to build identity on God, ministry leader says

By DIANNA L. CAGLE | BR Assistant Managing Editor

**B**efore a young woman can figure out her own identity, she must first figure out who God is, said Erin Davis.

Davis ([erindavis.org](http://erindavis.org)), a mom of two children and an author and speaker, spoke at “The Hidden Person of the Heart” mother/daughter retreat and the “Who’s Your Person?” Girls Embrace Ministry event. Embrace Women’s Ministry through the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina sponsored both events that were held March 22-23 at Caraway Conference Center and Camp. The two events drew more than 200 women and girls.

“As girls we try to build our own sense of identity,” said Davis, founder of Graffiti Ministries ([graffitiministries.com](http://graffitiministries.com)) and author of *Graffiti: Learning to See the Art in Ourselves* and *Beyond Bath Time: Embracing Motherhood as a Sacred Role*. “What matters is who God says you are.”

Experts call this generation the “mosaic generation,” Davis said, because they take what they want to use from each topic and assemble a mosaic of what they believe. The problem with this type of approach, she added, is that their belief system is not built fully on Truth.

“We need Your truth, God,” prayed Davis. “All the other truth we might try to assemble isn’t Your truth.”

Around 80 percent of girls will walk away from the faith, Davis said. It was when Davis was serving at a church with her husband that she realized the lies upon which she had built her life.

“When I was your age, I was absolutely eaten away with lies,” said Davis, who shared how the Bible helped her find Truth.

“God’s Word is a deep, deep well,” she said. “I can drop my bucket down in His well.” As Davis explored the scripture she began to learn the truth about who she was in Christ.

## God’s love is steadfast

One of the key points Davis stressed to the girls was that God loves them.

“It’s not the kind of love that comes and goes,” she said, but a steadfast, constant and unwavering love (Psalm 137). “That kind of love should change things.”

Davis encouraged them not to base their identity on achievements, beauty and other distractions or feelings.

“Feelings aren’t facts,” said Davis. “I wished I’d learned it earlier. Just because I felt it doesn’t mean it’s true. We have to build it on the solid rock of God’s Word.”



Girls fight over a T-shirt during a game March 23 at two simultaneous events hosted by Embrace Women’s Ministry through the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Above left, a mother and daughter paint together during one of the activity times at the mother/daughter retreat at Caraway Conference Center. (BR photo by Dianna L. Cagle)

## Reflection of God

Since girls are created in the image of God, they are to be image bearers of the Son, Jesus Christ. Davis told the girls they are a moon. On its own the moon does not have light but instead reflects the sun.

Instead of allowing Hollywood or friends to dictate who they are, Davis urged the girls to pursue God to find their true purpose.

“The most important lesson about being a girl, about you, is to reveal something about God,” she said.

How? “By becoming a student of His Word,” Davis said. “When you want to examine something you compare it to the original.”

## Distinctly female

“One of the most unique and incredible things we can do as image bearers is being a lifegiver,” like Eve, said Davis. With women pursuing careers and delaying having children until later in life, Davis said, “motherhood is completely devalued in our culture.”

“I’m not anti-career. I’m not anti-college,” she said. “[But] my career and my master’s degree do not bear the image of God.”

Culture tells people the way to be a powerful woman is to have others serve you.

“God flips that and requires you to be a servant,” Davis said.

Culture also tells girls to focus on

beauty, Davis said. “A modern girl attracts attention any way she can. But a godly girl deflects attention.”

If girls want to be “God’s girls,” first they must learn who He is and imitate Him.

“It’s a simple formula really,” said Davis.

“Simple to say, hard to do.” Based on Matt. 6:31-34, we should seek first the kingdom “every day at every age,” she said.

“The entirety of the Bible is about Him preserving a relationship with us. There’s nothing better than living the way you were made to live.”

## Addressing mothers

Davis encouraged mothers to get past the desire to love their children “enough to make them OK.” Instead, “tell them you love them but God loves them more than you do.”

Every parent is trying to raise good kids or athletic kids, Davis said, but a mother’s job “is to raise radical followers of Jesus. It’s not about you.”

Davis urged the parents to raise them based on God’s principles not “based on who I think they should be.”

“Let’s have bigger dreams for our kids ... than that they are safe. They are to be a reflection of Christ.”

Breakout sessions offered smaller environments for girls and their mothers or leaders to strengthen their relationships and to discuss some of the issues



“The entirety of the Bible is about Him preserving a relationship with us,” said Erin Davis. “There’s nothing better than living the way you were made to live.”

they face in school or in their homes. Topics included modesty, peer pressure and God’s desire for them as girls and mothers.

For more about Embrace events contact Ashley Allen, director, at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5559, or [embrace@ncbaptist.org](mailto:embrace@ncbaptist.org). **BR**

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# Former seminary president Duke McCall dies

Baptist Press

**D**uke McCall, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's president for three decades who earlier led the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) Executive Committee, died April 2. He was 98.

McCall was president of Southern Seminary from 1951-82, a period that stretched from the civil rights movement to the beginning of the conservative resurgence in the SBC. McCall stood firm for the civil rights of African Americans, and it was during his tenure at the seminary that Martin Luther King Jr. spoke in chapel and in class in 1961.

He also led the seminary in growth, both in enrollment and in its endowment. In 2011, the Duke K. McCall Chair of Christian Leadership and the McCall Leadership Lectures were created with funding by McCall and the McCall Family Foundation. In 2009, the seminary's welcome center, the Duke K. McCall Sesquicentennial Pavilion, was named in his honor on the Louisville, Ky., campus.

During the SBC conservative resurgence, McCall sided with the moderates, and at the SBC annual meeting in 1982 he lost to Jimmy Draper in a runoff for president. Draper's election was the fourth in the line of conservative presidents.

Despite his theological differences with conservatives, McCall continued to state his love for Southern Baptists: "We do not always agree with each other," he said in 2009 at the seminary's 150th celebration service, "but what I call upon us to recognize is that the hand of God is upon this institution and those with responsibility for her and that we acknowledge that and say, 'We will continue our own convictions as they diverge from one another. But we will stand together in one common commitment in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.'"



Duke McCall was president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for three decades.

Prior to his service at Southern Seminary, McCall served as president of the Executive Committee from 1946-51 and president of the Baptist Bible Institute in New Orleans – now New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary – from 1943-46.

SBTS President R. Albert Mohler Jr., in a 2011 campus event attended by McCall at age 97 marking the 60th anniversary of his election as the seminary's seventh president, said, "Dr. Duke McCall is representative of a generation of Southern Baptists who served and built this denomination, its churches and institutions," Mohler said. "We need to remember that we are living in houses we did not build, and we are drinking from wells we did not dig."

McCall was a native of Meridian, Miss., who grew up in Memphis, Tenn., the son of a judge.

He graduated from Furman University in South Carolina in 1935 and earned two degrees from Southern Seminary, a Th.M. in 1938 and doctor of theology in 1941.

He and his late wife Marguerite had four sons.

Following her death in 1980, McCall married Winona McCandless. **BR**

# Composer, hymn writer dies

Baptist Press

**P**rolific Baptist composer and hymn writer Buryl Red died April 1 at the age of 76.

Red was the founding musical director and conductor of The CenturyMen, a men's choir made up of Baptist church music directors from around the world.

Since their founding in 1969, The CenturyMen have performed across the U.S. and in at least 11 other countries, according to thecenturymen.com.

When The CenturyMen's recording "Beautiful Star – A Celebration of Christmas" was nominated for a Grammy in 2000, Red told Baptist Press, "We see our work as a way to communicate the message of Christ with the secular world. I feel like our music can communicate beyond the musical language of the church."

In addition to his work with The CenturyMen, Red is perhaps best remembered as composer of "Celebrate Life," a musical created with lyricist Ragan Courtney, considered a landmark in church music. Released in 1972, Celebrate Life is still in print, sold by LifeWay Worship, the music division of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

LifeWay worship director Mike Harland remembered Red in a blog post April 2.

"I'll never forget the first time I saw a set of drums in a church," Harland wrote. "It was there to be part of the groundbreaking youth musical, Celebrate Life."

The song "In Remembrance" from



BURYL RED

Celebrate Life has become a standard and is included in the latest edition of the Baptist Hymnal. Red conducted a choral performance of the song at the hymnal's dedication ceremony in 2008, calling it "a highlight of his career," Harland recounted. Red's output includes more than 2,500 published works; production of more than 4,000 recordings; the musical supervision, composition and arranging for several hundred shows, documentaries and musical specials for network and cable television; and the writing and editing of more than 50 music textbooks, according to information from a working program for an upcoming concert in Red's honor.

A native of Little Rock, Ark., Red graduated from the music schools of Baylor University and Yale University before making his home in New York City. In the early '60s, he served as music minister of Manhattan Baptist Church, the first Southern Baptist Church in New York City.

Red died in New York City, after a long battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Virginia, son Eric and grandson Adrian. A private funeral was held April 9 in Manhattan. A memorial tribute concert is planned for April 29 at Central Presbyterian Church in Manhattan.

Memorials to: The CenturyMen, c/o Kim Bowen, 1610 Russell Avenue, Jefferson City, TN 37760, or to The Broadway Inspirational Voices, c/o Michael Reeves Associates, 224 West 30th Street, Suite 1006 New York, NY 10001. **BR**

## OPPORTUNITY CORNER

### Ridgecrest hosts 'The Andy Griffith Show' Bible study

Ridgecrest Conference Center, near Black Mountain, will host the third annual "Life Lessons From Mayberry: It's All There in Black and White" Bible study event Sept. 24-26.

The three-day conference based on "The Andy Griffith Show" will feature Karen Knotts, daughter of Don Knotts; Floyd the barber tribute artist Allan Newsome; and show alum and dobro legend LeRoy "Mack" McNees. Worship will be

led by Craig Hamlin and Mike Moose. The event includes breakout sessions, scriptural lessons, music and country cooking. And two nights lodging in the conference center hotel will cost a total of \$219 (per person, based on double occupancy).

Visit [lifeway.com/mayberry](http://lifeway.com/mayberry) or contact Debbie Whisenant at (615) 251-2487. To register, contact Ridgecrest Conference Center at (800) 588-7222.

## Submissions

The *Biblical Recorder* is pleased to publish staff changes, church news and events with a statewide interest. Please send information immediately following an event, or for opportunity corner, send at least two months in advance. All submissions will be subjected to *Biblical Recorder* styles and guidelines. Send to [dianna@BRnow.org](mailto:dianna@BRnow.org) or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512. Call (919) 847-2127.

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# 99-year-old recalls 1925 birth of CP

By Karen L. Willoughby | Baptist Press

**M**.O. Owens Jr. was still in knickers on May 13, 1925, the day his parents took him to a pivotal session of the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting. That was the day the Cooperative Program was born.

Now 99, Owens recalls the vote that ushered in the CP as a system of financial support for the missions and ministries of Southern Baptists within state conventions and throughout the nation and world.

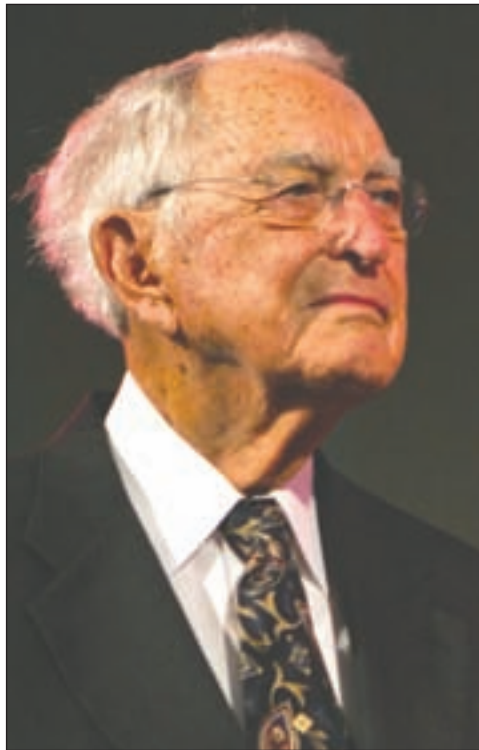
"I was there but I was only 11," Owens told Baptist Press. "I don't have a keen memory of specifics. There wasn't any great opposition, but it was a new idea to the pastors."

"I remember very vividly how excited my dad was, how delighted he was, and I do remember so well he was concerned about enlisting the other pastors," Owens said of his father, the late Milum Oswell Owens Sr., who pastored two churches. "He was the only pastor from that association [Orangeburg County, S.C.] who attended that convention."

His parents must have realized the historical significance of the vote because Owens was allowed to stay with relatives during the other sessions of the five-day event, which took place in a brand-new convention hall in Memphis.

It was hot that day, Owens recalled; other reports say air was "oppressively muggy" in the convention center with about 5,600 people in their Sunday best. Owens recalls his father wore a suit and his mother, her best dress plus hat and gloves.

The SBC had space enough, with an 11,000-seating capacity, in what was known as the Memphis and Shelby County Auditorium and Market House, opened in 1924. For "air-conditioning," it had just seven large fans to cool the entire auditorium, along with heat-escaping



M.O. Owens Jr. remembers the trip his family made in 1925 to Memphis, Tenn., so that his father, a South Carolina pastor, could cast his vote for the creation of Southern Baptists' Cooperative Program. CP Sunday is April 14. (Photo courtesy of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary)

ceiling vents, said Eric Elam, director of operations for the Greater Memphis Chamber of Commerce.

Owens' father apparently had planned for months to attend the SBC annual meeting, because he had purchased a brand-new 1925 black Plymouth that spring, replacing his 1916 black T-model Ford.

"Before that day [of the CP vote] there were very few Sundays there wouldn't be someone appealing for an offering," Owens said. "I remember my parents talking about it, Dad saying we needed to figure out a way to lump some of these appeals together – foreign missions, home missions, Indian missions, orphanages and more. And then he heard about [what is known today as the Cooperative Program] and he was tickled pink when

it happened."

Owens Sr. wasn't alone in his pleasure that the Cooperative Program was approved. An article by Todd Starnes written in 2000 for SBC LIFE noted that "the messengers heartily approved the report [by what was known as the Future Program Commission] with the following recommendation: 'That from the adoption of this report by the Convention our co-operative work be known as 'The Co-operative Program of Southern Baptists.'"

The fundraising strategy was created with a dozen working principles, including that the CP would be an equal partnership between state conventions and the SBC and that "money given by the churches was to be evenly divided between the state convention and SBC," according to the establishing document.

"It was all brand-new to the local pastors, and my dad's job, he felt, was to tell them about it, the reason for it and ... he was, I think, fairly successful," Owens said of his father, then pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Cordova, S.C., and Two Mile Swamp Baptist Church, some eight miles down a dirt road. "The two churches together, as I remember, said they would pay him \$2,000 a year, but it wasn't guaranteed."

Owens also became a pastor, serving churches in South Carolina, Florida and Georgia before starting Parkwood Baptist Church in Gastonia, N.C., as a mission in 1963. Beyond his retirement in 1980, Owens has continued to serve Parkwood as pastor emeritus, preaching there weekly in a ministry now spanning 50-plus years.

"Money was scarce [in 1925], actually," Owens said. "There had been a period right after World War I when there was a sort of a boom and money was sort of plentiful, but then came a recession and that was right at the time the trip was made to Memphis."

The Owens family drove over dirt-packed roads to get from South Carolina to Memphis, staying with relatives when possible to save money.

"It took us four days, because the front wheels of the Plymouth were not aligned properly," Owens recalled. "Somewhere between Birmingham and Memphis the tires were worn out and Dad had to buy new ones."

Nothing was going to keep them from that important vote, however, so Owens' father dug into his wallet and paid for two tires and an alignment, about \$100, the equivalent of nearly \$1,000 today. In not having to pay for lodging in Memphis, it was possible for the family to drive 700-plus miles from South Carolina, through Atlanta and Birmingham, to go to the meeting and to pay for the tires and alignment, Owens said.

"The agencies and institutions were not happy with the new plan at first, but in only a few years they realized how fortunate they were in the benefits of the plan," Owens said. "They no longer had to go begging, and their financial benefits began to increase. ... It was only a few years until it was recognized by the churches as a divinely-oriented concept."

Owens said he has watched for years the strength of the CP his father was so pleased to help pass.

"It is a beautiful arrangement," Owens said. "The churches are not plagued by appeals for money. Each church can choose to participate – or not. Each agency and institution can feel fairly secure in anticipating its designated share."

The CP has enabled the SBC to develop a well-organized worldwide missions thrust that reaches into more than 160 nations, with missionaries trained by six of the "largest and most effective seminaries in the world," Owens said. "Each state has had the privilege of using its share of CP funds for colleges, children's homes, hospitals, homes for the aging, or whatever its apparent needs might be."

The CP method of pooling mission dollars for maximum effectiveness "is not perfect, but its advantages are great," Owens said. "There are biblical reasons why it is good, and there are compelling logistical reasons why it works so well."

"Through the Cooperative Program, we Southern Baptists are supporting thousands of missionaries here in America and all around the world. And these missionaries are specially trained to plant the Gospel in whatever area they are working," Owens continued. "In 2011 ... they planted more churches and baptized more people than all the 45,000-plus Southern Baptist churches here in the USA."

Owens received the 2011 Heritage Award from the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and the North Carolina Baptist Foundation for his exemplary service, philanthropy and leadership in missions and ministries within the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina over the years. At Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, an academic post was named in his honor last year – the Dr. M.O. Owens Jr. Chair of New Testament Studies.

In the years after the vote to establish the CP, Owens Sr. went on to pastor First Baptist Church of Taylors, S.C., where he was followed some decades later by Frank Page, current president of the SBC Executive Committee.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Karen L. Willoughby is managing editor of the Baptist Message, newsjournal of the Louisiana Baptist Convention.) **BR**

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# Student makes fruitful journey to Bible school

Alaska native treks  
4,500 miles  
to attend Fruitland  
Baptist Bible Institute

By AMY B. MCCRAW | Special to the Recorder

New students looking on the Internet for directions to the Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute will find detailed instructions to the campus, beginning with an exit off Interstate 26 and a map of the local area.

But at least one student at the school probably needed more than just a quick look on the school's website to find her way to class.

That's because 22-year-old Laura Cotton drove the entire 4,500 miles from her home in Alaska to the Bible college in Henderson County this past summer.

Cotton said she made the trip from Alaska because she felt drawn to the area and the biblical education offered at Fruitland.

"I feel God wanted me to come here," Cotton said. "I feel like He called me here to attend Fruitland."

Cotton began classes in July after making the road trip in her old Subaru



Laura Cotton traveled from Alaska last summer to study at Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute. (Times-News photo by Patrick Sullivan)

with her mother. The two made the trip in about five days. Cotton said they had a wonderful time on the road, despite her occasional moments of doubt.

"I remember driving through Canada feeling scared. I was like, 'What am I doing?'" Cotton's fears soon subsided, and the two reached the school in one piece.

Her mother flew back to Alaska, while Cotton began classes and settled into her

new home away from home.

Cotton is working toward an associate degree in religion/ church ministries. She has not decided what she wants to do after she graduates, but she said she thinks getting her degree will prepare her for whatever comes her way.

"I believe as a Christian I have a mission field wherever I am. I want to be more equipped and ready for it," she said.

Cotton decided to attend Fruitland after her father, who is a Baptist minister, suggested the school. He attended the institute from 1991 to 1993 when Cotton was a young child.

"He loved Fruitland so much. When I said I wanted to go to Bible college, he recommended it," she said.

It's not unusual for the children of former students to come to Fruitland, said Bobby Garrett, the school's director of facilities.

Garrett said more women are also deciding to attend the school to earn degrees they use in various faith-based careers, including counseling and children's ministry.

The school's outreach to evangelism conferences around the country and its reputation as a first-class Bible college has also drawn students from many states and some foreign countries.

"The foundation of this school has never changed," Garrett said. "It's a Bible college. When you teach the truth, you never go wrong."

Cotton was 1 year old when her father began his education at Fruitland. She

**"I believe as a Christian  
I have a mission field  
wherever I am. I want to  
be more equipped and  
ready for it."  
— Laura Cotton**

said she doesn't remember much about the time her family spent in the area except for a trip to Sliding Rock and a visit with a relative in Murphy.

This time, Cotton said she will have many more memories to take with her when she leaves to begin her career.

"I'd never seen fireflies before. I'd never seen an apple tree before. I picked an apple off a tree for the first time," she said.

Cotton also saw snakes for the first time when she visited Chimney Rock State Park last summer.

"I saw four in one day," she said.

The mild winter in Western North Carolina has also been a welcome change from the 60-below temperatures usually found in her hometown of Delta Junction.

The small town in Alaska is in one of the colder parts of the state and is about six hours from Anchorage. It is also home to Clearwater Baptist Church, where her father is pastor.

While Cotton said she has enjoyed the warmer winter and new experiences, her move to the area has not been without its challenges.

The summer's heat, humidity and influx of insects were "a little extreme," she said.

The size of the community also took a little getting used to.

"It's crowded," Cotton said. "I'm used to being able to just drive and get away. In Alaska, that's easy to do. There are thousands of miles of emptiness. Here, you don't get that far from a town."

But Cotton said the few drawbacks she has experienced are nothing when compared to the new friends, new experiences and the education she has received at Fruitland.

"It's been really amazing," she said. "It's been neat meeting people. The people are really, really nice."

(EDITOR'S NOTE — Amy B. McCraw writes for the Times-News in Hendersonville, where this story was originally published.) **BR**

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FOR THE LATEST N.C. BAPTIST NEWS AND INFORMATION



# Skateboarder finds 'harmony' with faith, sport, music

For years professional skateboarder Josh Harmony has made a name for himself showing off his talent in some of the industry's biggest skateboarding videos. Harmony, 29, also has graced the covers of many skateboarding magazines. Learning difficult tricks and pushing the envelope, Harmony quickly became a member of elite skateboarding companies Toy Machine Skateboards, Fallen Footwear, and RVCA Clothing.



ROMAN GABRIEL  
Sports Q & A

As his skateboarding career progressed, his desire to create music did as well. Harmony is now on his fourth album using a unique combination of gospel, bluegrass and blues music with a faith message. Harmony's simple and poetic lyrics express a longing for heaven, physical healing – having gone through several hip and knee surgeries due to skate-related injuries – and a desire for a deeper understanding of God's plan for his life. Harmony shared about his skateboarding, music roots, his Christian faith, and the platform of sports and music he uses to minister to younger generations. Harmony lives in Long Beach, Calif., with his wife Jenna and their two young sons, Harrison and Henry. He continues to ride for Toy Machine.

Below are excerpts from the interview, which was edited for clarity, brevity and length.



Josh Harmony uses skateboarding and his music as a platform to share about his relationship with Christ. (Contributed photos)

**Q:** How did you get into making music, especially bluegrass?

**A:** I've been ... playing since I was a kid. I really started writing songs [in] 2009. ... Some of my favorites [include]: The Beatles, Elliott Smith, the Bluesman, and The Rev. Gary Davis. I've always had a love for bluegrass music ... this amazing untapped world of music that most people don't know about ... going back learning about guys like Doc Watson. I started playing the banjo and was just inspired by it. I watched this documentary called "High Lonesome" about Belmont Row and that whole region and the music there (in North Carolina). It's amazing. It's been great getting some shows done and the opportunity to hit the road.

**Q:** How did skateboarding become such a big deal in your life?

**A:** I really wasn't into team sports when I was a kid, but I did play some soccer and basketball and other stuff when I was really really young. ... One day I saw some neighbor kids go by skateboarding. .... One was a really good skater and he did this incredible trick. I saw it and said, "What is that?" ... I couldn't believe that you could do what they were doing on a skateboard. ... When my dad asked me what I wanted for Christmas I said I wanted a skateboard. Then he took me to a skate shop and we kind

of started discovering what this is all about together. I remember watching [a] skateboard video on their TV, and I was just blown away by what you could do. I had no idea ... it was this incredible culture or subculture. It was just amazing to discover.

**Q:** How has your relationship with God impacted your professional music and skateboarding careers?

**A:** My inspiration for my music and skateboarding comes from the Holy Spirit. ... He's really the one that has turned me on to everything that God is ... and inspired me to really write my music. He's a giver of every perfect gift. ... Really it's all been Him. ... I started skating, ... I was born again when I was about 19. He flipped my world upside down. ... He's everything to me. ... He's given these platforms, and my only hope is that people would see Christ through my life in the way that He's [allowed] me to express myself.

**Q:** What would you say to a parent who might be concerned about their child getting into skateboarding and the culture that comes with that sport?

**A:** I think that's kind of a justified concern, considering a good deal of the subculture of skateboarding is pretty dark. But there's also some great people involved in skateboarding as well. It's almost like if you're not praying for your kids and rais[ing] them right ... it doesn't matter what they get into. ... Whatever your kids get into they are going to have to face the jagged rocks of life. ... The depravity of man is such an evil thing. We have to pray for the best for our kids all the time no matter what they're into.

... I think it's important to encourage the things your kids are passionate about, if not we can drive a wedge between parents and kids.

**Q:** How have you and your fellow Christian skateboarders had a positive impact on the rest of the sport?

**A:** Skateboarding has always reflected the counterculture, rebellious kind of activity and culture. ... Even now there are skateboarders that have 666 and Satan tattoos and stuff. You can count on one hand those pro skateboarders who are in the magazines (high profile) and doing it for Christ and living for Jesus. ... Those [who] do have [an] impact, it is pretty strong. ... As for me personally, I'm trying to stay as influential for Christ as I can. ... You do feel like sometimes that you're on your own.

Learn more about Harmony's skateboarding, music and latest album "Benefit of the Doubt" by going to [joshharmony-music.com](http://joshharmony-music.com), [toymachine.com](http://toymachine.com), and on Facebook at Josh Harmony.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Roman Gabriel III hosts Sold Out Sports Saturday nights at 8 p.m. EST on American Family Radio. He is an evangelist and motivational speaker. Contact him at (910) 431-6483 or email [soldoutrg3@gmail.com](mailto:soldoutrg3@gmail.com). His website is [www.soldouttv.com](http://www.soldouttv.com).) **BR**



## Hulls Grove Bapt. offers skateboarding ministry

BR staff

Would Annie Armstrong use a skateboard to share the Gospel if she was alive today? Marcus Redding, pastor of Hulls Grove Baptist Church in Vale, North Carolina, said he believes she would.

Redding recently shared about how the church uses their skateboard ministry to share the gospel with young people who normally would not come to church.

For those who may not consider skateboarding to be a legitimate outreach tool, don't tell Redding.

"My heavens, I don't care what it takes," Redding said. "If I have to catch them on a skateboard or take them on a ... hunting trip, it really doesn't matter to me

[as long as] we get to tell them about Jesus."

Each week Hulls Grove's The Way Skate ministry attracts about 25-30 skaters on Tuesdays and Thursdays to a rented facility to ride their boards. During that time they work on their skateboarding skills and hear the gospel, said Bobby Farmer, site pastor for the ministry.

"Last night I had a conversation with [a skateboarder]," said Farmer, who described the young man as once being "a total atheist."

"He's really on the verge of giving his life to the Lord. ... God's showing him that he needs a relationship with Him"

Farmer mentioned another skateboarder, Cody, who

turned his life over to Christ and is now leading groups each week.

"He was one of those [who] had been on the fringe ... kind of turned away from God ... Got into drugs and alcohol. We kept inviting him. He kept coming to the skate ministry.

"About a year and a half ago .. he gave his life to the Lord. I pretty well turn the study and testimony time over to him," Farmer added. "Part of our goal is ... to train these kids up to be the leaders."

For more information about this ministry and how your church can become involved, contact Hulls Grove Baptist at (704) 276-1181 or go to [hullsgrove.org](http://hullsgrove.org). **BR**



# Autism

Continued from page 1

“[It] was very frustrating not being able to worship together,” said Brown of the church they used to attend.

“They would tell us, ... ‘Just bring him. He can sit in the pew. It’s no big deal if he claps his hands and screams.’ But ... that was kind of a burden placed on us because ... not everyone understands that. We didn’t want that to impact visitors coming to the church. We felt like it was best to just ... keep him away.”

The Browns aren’t alone in their struggle. The Center for Disease Control reports that 1 in 88 children has autism.

Some parents with special needs children are turned away from churches that contend they aren’t equipped to handle this issue. And other families, like the Browns, just go when they can.

But then the Browns heard about Rich Fork Baptist Church in Thomasville.

Rich Fork’s reputation for ministering to families who have children with autism and other disabilities had spread throughout the area. And the Browns decided to visit the church.

“It was such a blessing to just be able to drop our son off, know that he was safe, well taken care of,” said Brown, whose family joined the church last December.

“We were able to go [to church] together ... as a family; where as before that was kind of unheard of.”

With this month being National Autism Awareness

**“But it rarely becomes an outreach ministry ... to their community and draws people to their church. Rich Fork is an exception to that.”**  
– Donnie Wiltshire

month, pastor Michael Bowers said he’s excited about the ministry. He also added that he can’t take much credit for its success.

“It’s been something that I’ve been able to stand back and watch,” Bowers said. “As a pastor I’m very proud of ... the number of volunteers and the resources that have gone into [this ministry]. ... It’s really blossomed beautifully.”

The special needs ministry at Rich Fork started about five years ago. A family with an autistic child joined the church, and Rich Fork’s children’s ministry leader Gaylin Stewart looked for a way to help that family. The church asked volunteers to “shadow” (accompany or escort) the child and help him acclimate into a typical class with other kids his age.

“That worked well for that particular child,” said Stewart, who added that the church’s initial effort soon attracted other families. “[They] started coming to us ... and [asking], ‘Would you provide for our child, as well?’”

Since then the ministry has promoted itself more in the community and grown to about 17 children – in addition to the church’s adult program.

Parents meet regularly with Stewart to discuss the needs of their children. The church has equipped some of their doors with alarms – that the community helped purchase – in case a child tries to open one of them. And



Students and volunteers participate in an activity at Rich Fork Baptist Church in Thomasville. The church has a ministry that reaches out to families with special needs children. (Contributed photo)

parents occasionally lead training workshops.

“Now we have more of an individual plan for each child,” said Stewart, who explained some children might need more one-on-one time than others.

The church also uses a method called “reverse integration,” where typical students participate and build relationships with developmentally disabled children.

“Some of our older students are now spending time with [special needs] students close to their age,” said Pastor Bowers, who said the approach helps train young volunteers for future ministry.

“I think it makes them a more well-equipped believer,” Bowers said.

“I hope ... our students graduate and leave Rich Fork and go to other parts of the state, and other parts of the world, and they go ‘Ya know, I can do this here.’”

In addition to the classroom, the church plans special activities for the children, such as swimming parties or a trip this month to an Alpaca farm.

“Valentine’s Day, [the church] had a couple’s dinner and they were ... providing special needs child care,” said parent Misty Brown. “My husband and I were able to go to church, ... eat dinner and have both of our kids taken care of.”

“It’s a ministry to their whole family,” added Stewart.

Churches like Rich Fork are a rarity, said Donnie Wiltshire, senior consultant with special ministries for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

“Sometimes out of necessity ... churches will minister to [a] family or that child that has special needs in their church,” Wiltshire said. “But it rarely becomes an outreach ministry ... to their community and draws people to their church. Rich Fork is an exception to that.”

“Rich Fork embraced these people, these families, these children with special needs and ministered to them in a really good way.”

In North Carolina, Wiltshire said, there are about 180 to 190 Baptist congregations that have some type of special needs ministry. Wiltshire added that most of those ministries, however, are geared toward adults.

“That’s a great and wonderful thing, but there are a lot of children around our state [who] have special needs,” he said. “There’s tremendous need across our state for churches that would open up to families ... and would aggressively, enthusiastically, with love and energy, embrace them and bring them into their church.”

“There are very few churches that aren’t touched with a child or youth that has autism in one degree or another,” he said.

The church’s ministry has particularly been a blessing to Karen and Mac McGee and their 17-year-old son, Kevin, who has Down Syndrome.

Each Sunday Kevin participates during worship time in the auditorium and always presents his offering before the service.

“For Kevin, for him not to worship would be a crisis,” McGee said. “That’s a part of him. That’s like telling him, ‘You can’t go on the playground anymore.’”

When the opening time of music concludes, a volunteer escorts Kevin to his class.

“He feels a connection with the Lord, there,” McGee said. “The third time we visited ... his feet hit the pavement [and] he said ‘Kevin’s church.’”

While Rich Fork is a larger congregation of about 1,000 people who attend weekly, churches of all sizes can minister to special needs families, said Stewart.

Any church, she said, can have a volunteer adult or teenager “shadow” a child. Occasionally a church can ask a few of the developmentally disabled adults in the church to take up the offering.

“It is just beautiful to see that,” Stewart said. “[It’s a] simple thing, but they take it very seriously. I hope some day some of these children can do that too. ... They’re not just at our church. They’re a part of our church.”

Stewart said she believes the ministry is drawing children closer to God. She recalled a time when she was ill and in the hospital. A father and his two autistic twin girls visited her and shared how the girls had asked to pray for her.

“When they came and told me that in the hospital ... that was worth everything to me,” said Stewart, her voice cracking with emotion. “I knew that what we were doing was taking root in them.”

“Just precious people, all of them,” she said. “They carry a heavy load. To think that a church would turn them away ... I just can’t do it. Whatever they need I’m going to try my best to provide it for them.”

For more information about Rich Fork’s ministry go to <http://www.richfork.com> or, contact Donnie Wiltshire, senior consultant with the special needs team for the Baptist State Convention of N.C., at (800) 395-5102 ext. 5630, or go to <http://www.ncbaptist.org>. **BR**

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# Born for this: autistic child becomes missionary to Japan

By MARIA ELENA BASELER | Baptist Press

Steven Kunkel's nickname appears at the top of his Facebook page: Sugoisteve.

Sugoi (pronounced sue-GOY) means "awesome" in Japanese.

"Sugoi is my catchphrase," Steven explains, "so sometimes my friends call me 'Sugoisteve.'"

But from Steven's perspective, the "sugoi" part isn't about him. It's about God.

"I always want to give God the glory for what He has done in my life," he says.

That attitude was evident as Steven stood before worshippers at a Japanese-Paraguayan house church in Asunción, Paraguay. Accompanying himself on the guitar, he sang a favorite song by Casting Crowns, a Christian praise band: "The voice of Truth says, 'This is for My glory.' Out of all the voices calling out to me, I will choose to listen and believe the voice of Truth."

Listening to Steven sing, his parents – missionaries Tim and Iracema Kunkel – wiped tears from their eyes. More than anyone else in the room besides Steven, they understood what these words have meant to him.

Eighteen years ago, Steven was diagnosed with autism, a developmental disorder causing problems in behavior, communication and social interaction. At age 5, Steven couldn't speak. Today, at 23, he speaks four languages – English, Spanish, Portuguese and Japanese. And he's learning five more – Arabic, Farsi, Hebrew, Mandarin Chinese and Tagalog.

## Symptoms of autism

From the beginning, doctors said Steven was high functioning. Even so, he displayed all 14 of the most common symptoms of autism.

Steven couldn't tolerate change, for example. He didn't like to hug. He preferred being alone. He avoided eye contact, echoed others' words and laughed at inappropriate times. He also had a habit of spinning himself and objects.

Today, as a missionary in Japan, Steven has only one of the 14 symptoms – inappropriate laughter – and it's hardly noticeable. He taught himself how to manage it through Internet research.

Steven spent years struggling to overcome most of the other symptoms, and God used many people in that process. Steven's parents created a structured and loving family environment, guiding him through the challenges of autism. His two older siblings, Julia and John Glenn, encouraged him with their love. Many believers prayed. Professionals like speech therapists and physicians provided specialized help.

Strengthened by God and his support team, Steven himself did years of hard work for healing.

"Sometimes it was like I was climbing a mountain, facing a lot of difficulties," he said. "Whenever I felt a difficulty or a weakness come, I fell down. But I managed to get up and keep walking."

And through God's power, Steven has climbed to some amazing heights.

## 'Seeing through God's eyes'

One of these was Steve's commissioning as a missionary to Japan.

"I've felt today that so many questions about Steven's autism have been answered," Steven's mom, Iracema, said, "like a veil is being lifted from my eyes and I'm seeing things through God's eyes. I'm thinking, 'for this day you were born, Steven.'"

Holding his well-marked Japanese Bible, Steven sat with head bowed as fellow believers surrounded him

inside the Japanese-Paraguayan house church. The circle included church members, visitors and Japanese children Steven had taught at the church. Steven's parents – International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries in Asunción – stood behind him.

The group laid hands on Steven as pastor Koki Nowada, his Japanese mentor, led in prayer. Nowada's normally soft voice grew louder and more intense as he prayed in Japanese for God's anointing on Steven.

It's a powerful moment for worshippers. Steven's dad, Tim, sobbed with joy.

He remembers the day doctors diagnosed Steven with autism, not long after the Kunkels moved to Uruguay as new missionaries.

"It was like one child died and another child was born," Tim recalls. "But God, in His permissive will, allowed this to happen. And God, in His sovereignty, had a plan."

The Kunkels saw God's plan unfold as they continued serving in Uruguay. Because few services for autistic children were available there, Iracema studied special education so she could teach Steven herself. In the process, she discovered a gift for working with autistic children. She began sharing that expertise with parents of other autistic children in Uruguay. In turn, God used those connections to open doors for the Kunkels to witness for Christ.

"I'm realizing now that a lot of what God has had us doing on the mission field – first in Uruguay and then after we moved to Paraguay – hasn't been so much about us as missionaries," Iracema says. "It was about Steven. It was like God was using us to help put all the pieces of the puzzle in place for Steven, so this autistic child could grow up to be a missionary for God's glory."

One important puzzle piece fell into place when Steven accepted Christ at age 8. Later at 15, he became interested in Japan. While visiting some friends in Uruguay's countryside, Steven fell asleep under a tree. He dreamed a Japanese girl told him she wanted him to learn her language and culture. When Steven woke up, he had a strong desire to learn Japanese and travel to Japan.

"Now, I think it was kind of like the dream Paul had when the Macedonian called him to come over and help," Steven says.

After the dream, Steven couldn't stop thinking about Japan. But no Japanese people lived in Salto, the small Uruguayan city where his parents then served. So Steven began learning Japanese on his own.

His mom bought him a Japanese phrasebook in her native Brazil, a country with the largest Japanese population outside of Japan. Steven taught himself all the phrases. He also became interested in Japanese cartoons called manga and began drawing his own.

Meanwhile, God was putting another puzzle piece in place.

## Moving to Paraguay

When Steven was 16, IMB officials asked the Kunkels to consider transferring from Uruguay to Paraguay. By then, the Kunkels' two older children had left home for college.

"Steven wasn't sure if he wanted to [move to Paraguay]," recalls Tim, who is from California. "And we weren't sure about the wisdom of moving him to a new country as an older teenager."

As the family prayed about the decision, Tim took a trip to Paraguay. There he noticed many Asian immigrants; one named Lily Maeda de Martinez waited on him in a store.



Steven Kunkel, left, and other worship team members lead children and youth in a praise chorus at a Japanese-Paraguayan house church in Asunción, Paraguay. Kunkel, the son of missionaries in Paraguay, became a missionary to Japan last year.





At his parents' home in Paraguay, Steven Kunkel points out a passage he is studying in his well-marked Japanese Bible. Steven, who has autism, now is serving as a missionary in Japan. He speaks four languages – including Japanese – and is learning five more.

**“Sometimes it was like I was climbing a mountain. ... Whenever I felt a difficulty or weakness come, I fell down. But I managed to get up and keep walking.”**  
**– Steven Kunkel**

Tim learned she was Japanese, born in Paraguay to Japanese immigrants. He told her about Steven and asked her to write him a letter in Japanese. Lily agreed.

When Tim returned home with the letter, “Steven was so excited,” Tim remembers. “That sealed it for him on going to Paraguay.”

With plans in place to move to Paraguay, the Kunkels left Uruguay for stateside assignment. In the U.S., Steven made some Japanese-American friends and learned more Japanese. He also rededicated his life to Christ at South Ridge Baptist Church in Jefferson City, Mo. It was then God’s call to Japan became clear.

Soon God showed Steven something more: Some of the Japanese manga he’d been reading had evil overtones.

“When I realized that, I tore up the bad manga with my bare hands,” Steven recounts.

From then on, Steven used biblical themes in cartoons he drew himself. Later he began composing sacred piano music.



After being commissioned as a missionary to Japan, Steven Kunkel shed tears of joy last year as he received a hug from Mari Nowada, whose husband, Koki, is pastor of the Japanese-Paraguayan house church in Asunción, Paraguay. The Nowadas mentored Steven in Japanese language, culture and ministry in preparation for his work in Japan.



Shortly before leaving home to serve as a missionary in Japan, 23-year-old Steven Kunkel, center, stands with his parents – International Mission Board missionaries Tim and Iracema Kunkel – in the family’s backyard in Asunción, Paraguay. Eighteen years ago, Steven was diagnosed with the developmental disorder of autism. Since then, God has used a team of people to help Steven overcome most of the symptoms of autism. That team includes his parents; his two older siblings, Julia, now a teacher of autistic children, and John Glenn; many other believers; and professionals such as speech therapists and physicians. (IMB photos by Rebecca Springer)

“The Lord showed me He had given me gifts He wanted to use in Japan,” Steven says.

### Preparing for Japan

But Steven needed Paraguay to get ready to go. And there God had people in place to help with that preparation.

Two of them: Japanese pastor Koki Nowada and his Japanese-Paraguayan wife Mari. They mentored Steven in Japanese language, culture and ministry for nearly seven years while he served in their congregation.

“We’re just a small house church, but we are a missionary church,” Koki Nowada says. “For the Japanese children [here], seeing Steven go to Japan as a missionary has been a wonderful opportunity to learn [about] the cost of discipleship.”

During Steven’s commissioning service, visiting preacher Jonathan Yao reminded those children – and their parents – that God wants to use them, too.

“If you say, ‘Lord, here I am,’ God will use you,” said Yao, a Chinese-Filipino pastor and a Kunkel family friend. “Don’t limit what God can do.”

God used Yao to open the door for Steven to serve in Japan, Tim notes.

“The missing piece in this whole puzzle was how Steven was going to get there,” Tim says. “That was a piece I just couldn’t figure out.”

In 2011 God provided that piece when Yao took Steven on a survey trip to Japan. Yao knew no Japanese

pastors, but before the trip he made a connection with a Filipino congregation in the small city of Shiojiri, Japan. He and Steven visited the church.

Steven made a strong impression on the congregation, who’d been praying for more workers. To help them expand their outreach to the Japanese, the church needed a Japanese translator, someone to teach Japanese to Filipino church members and a worker to teach English to Japanese children. The congregation also needed help in music and outreach to Brazilian immigrants.

As church leaders got to know Steven, they realized his skills matched everything in their prayers – all in one person.

“Steven is a miracle, a grace from God,” the pastor told Yao. “Where God’s grace is, His favor is.”

The congregation then invited Steven to “come over and help them.” He said “yes.”

That was seven years after Steven dreamed about Japan as a teenager in Uruguay.

“Since that dream, there have been lots of struggles and tests. But my faith has stayed strong,” Steven says.

“Today, I’m sure Japan is the land God has been preparing me for.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Maria Elena Baseler is an IMB writer/editor living in the Americas. Autism Awareness Month began April 2 with the United Nations World Autism Awareness Day. Autism is a general term used to describe a group of complex developmental brain disorders – called autism spectrum disorders (ASD) – caused by a combination of genes and environmental influences. In the United States, one in 88 children – and one in 54 boys – are affected by some form of autism, according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. For more information on autism and Autism Awareness Month, go to <http://www.autismspeaks.org>. This story is the first in a series about Steven Kunkel, autistic son of International Mission Board missionaries in South America. Steven currently is serving as an evangelical missionary in Shiojiri, Japan. Look for future stories at [BRnow.org](http://BRnow.org).) **BR**



# 7 questions & answers: the Supreme Court & gay marriage

By **MICHAEL FOUST** | Baptist Press

With the recent arguments before the Supreme Court (March 26-27), Baptist Press pulled together some commonly asked questions about the two days of arguments in the gay marriage cases:

**Q: What issues were the justices deciding?**

**A:** The constitutionality of two laws: the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and California's Proposition 8. Passed and signed into law in 1996, DOMA has two main sections: 1) It gives states the option of not recognizing gay marriages from other states and 2) it defines marriage for federal purposes and federal benefits as being between a man and a woman. Only the second section of DOMA was in front of the court. But even though the court did not deal with the DOMA section that affirms states' rights, it nevertheless could get to that issue with the Prop 8 case. Prop 8 is a constitutional amendment, adopted by California voters in 2008, that defines marriage as between a man and a woman. California is one of 30 states that define marriage within the state constitution in the traditional sense. Another 11 states define it that way via statute. Nine states recognize gay marriage.

**Q: What are the possible outcomes of the cases?**

**A:** If the court strikes down both DOMA and Prop 8, then gay marriage could be legalized in all 50 states. But there are other possible outcomes, including the upholding of both as constitutional. Based on the oral arguments heard by the court, though, that type of sweeping victory for social conservatives seems unlikely.

If the court arguments are any indication, it seems more likely that the court

will overturn the DOMA section at issue while at the same time not even ruling on the constitutionality of Prop 8, thus keeping the issue – for now – a state matter.

Predictions, though, can be tough, as proven in 2012 when most court-watchers thought the justices would overturn the historic health care law, only eventually to see the court uphold it.

**Q: If the court avoids ruling directly on Prop 8, what happens to the issue nationwide?**

**A:** A ruling that skirts the constitutionality of Prop 8 would limit the lower court's overturning of Prop 8 to California. Under one scenario, the court could rule that ProtectMarriage.com – the official sponsors of Prop 8 – did not have “legal standing” to appeal the decision after Prop 8 was overturned by the federal district court. “Standing” became an issue when the governor and attorney general of California chose not to appeal the decision.

Politico.com reported that under that scenario, the district court's ruling “could end up being limited to only the couple of counties and state officials named as defendants in the lawsuit.” The court also could dismiss the petition as “improvidently granted” – that is, justices could say it should not have taken the case in the first place.

Justice Anthony Kennedy – a swing vote – seemed to open the door for either scenario when he said there's a “substantial question” on standing and in the next sentence said, “I just wonder if the case was properly granted.”

A majority of the justices seemed to be in favor of punting on Prop 8's constitutionality.

**Q: Where did the justices fall on the broader question of gay marriage legalization?**

**A:** Kennedy, as he often does, made comments friendly to both sides. Conservatives were heartened to hear him express concern about going into “uncharted waters” and to note that “we have five years of information” on the impact of gay marriage “to weigh against 2,000 years of history or more” on the impact of traditional marriage. But liberals pointed out that Kennedy also seemed concerned about the “legal injury” to the “40,000 children in California” who live with same-sex parents and want “their parents to have full recognition and full status.”

But, as previously noted, Kennedy also implied that the court should not be considering Prop 8.

The court's liberal wing – Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan – all made comments friendly to gay marriage legalization, with Kagan rejecting the notion that traditional married laws can be tied to procreation. But all four justices also questioned whether the court should be hearing the Prop 8 case. And Sotomayor heartened social conservatives when she said in the DOMA arguments that “states control” marriage, although she said it in the context of the DOMA case, not Prop 8.

Three of the four members of the court's conservative wing – John Roberts, Antonin Scalia and Samuel Alito – expressed concern about gay marriage legalization. Roberts said marriage, throughout history, “developed to serve purposes that, by their nature, didn't include homosexual couples.” Conservative bloc member Clarence Thomas did not ask questions, as is his custom.

**Q: Which side won oral arguments – liberal or conservative groups?**

**A:** Potentially both, simply because there are two laws at play.

If the DOMA section in question is struck down, it would be a win for social liberals and would grant gay couples in the nine states where gay marriage is legal the federal benefits of marriage.

But if the court also gives deference to states on the issue of marriage, it would leave in place traditional laws in the remaining 41 states – with the possible exception of California.

That would be mostly a win for social conservatives. Kennedy made comments in supports of state rights.

**Q: When will the court issue its decisions?**

**A:** Most likely in June.

**Q: Where is public opinion on the issue?**

**A:** Polls are showing a small majority in support of gay marriage, although there's evidence that polling is off, at least some.

That's because – as the argument goes – a portion of the population is giving only the “socially desirable” answer to pollsters.

Chris Stirewalt, digital politics editor for Fox News, noted in a March 26 column that among the approximately 30 states that have voted on traditional marriage, pre-election polls “have underestimated support” for the traditional side in all but one instance.

He quoted New York University political science professor Patrick Egan as saying pre-election polls, by average, underestimate support for traditional marriage laws by 7 percentage points.

“There is more to this than simply the difference between the electorate and the general population,” Stirewalt wrote.

“Some folks are lying to pollsters.”

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Michael Foust is associate editor of Baptist Press.) **BP**

## Hobby Lobby gets boost in battle against abortion mandate

By **MICHAEL FOUST** | Baptist Press

**H**obby Lobby's legal battle against the abortion/contraceptive mandate received a boost March 29 when the full 10th Circuit Court of Appeals agreed to hear the company's case.

Such “en banc” hearings are relatively rare.

In November a federal judge ruled that Hobby Lobby must cover the drugs in its employee health insurance plans, and in December a three-judge panel of the 10th Circuit refused to step in and prevent Hobby Lobby from being impacted by the mandate.

Under the federal government's mandate, businesses must cover contraceptives and abortion-causing drugs

as part of their health insurance plans. The abortion-causing drugs come under brand names such as Plan B and ella and also are known as emergency contraceptives.

The 10th Circuit said it will expedite oral arguments and will set a date soon.

Hobby Lobby, an arts and crafts store, is owned by a Christian family who says the mandate violates their beliefs and their constitutionally protected freedoms. That family, the Greens, also owns Mardel, a Christian bookstore chain that also is part of the suit.

The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty is representing Hobby Lobby and Mardel.

“Full court review is reserved only for the most seri-

ous legal questions,” said Kyle Duncan, general counsel for the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty. “This case asks whether the First Amendment protects everyone's right to religious freedom, or whether it leaves out religious business owners like the Greens.”

Hobby Lobby and Mardel are self-insured and could face millions in fines if a court does not intervene. In January Hobby Lobby announced it had found a way to avoid for “several months” being penalized by the government. The announcement said the company had “discovered a way to shift the plan year for its employee health insurance, thus postponing the effective date of the mandate for several months.” A specific date was not given. **BP**




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# Russell Moore elected next ERLC president

By TOM STRODE | Baptist Press

**R**ussell Moore has been elected as the next president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC).

The ERLC's board of trustees approved Moore, currently dean of the school of theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in a special meeting Tuesday (March 26) at a Nashville hotel.

Moore, 41, a native of Biloxi, Miss., will be the eighth president of the entity charged by Southern Baptists with addressing moral and religious freedom issues.

With a background in government, the pastorate and seminary training, he already is well-known as a commentator from a Southern Baptist and evangelical Christian perspective on ethics, theology and the culture.

"I am honored and humbled to be asked to serve Southern Baptists as ERLC president," Moore said.

"I pray for God's grace to lead the ERLC to be a catalyst to connect the agenda of the kingdom of Christ to the cultures of local congregations for the sake of the mission of the gospel in the world."

Moore's election means he will be only the second ERLC president in the last quarter of a century.

He will succeed Richard Land, who will retire upon the completion of 25 years leading the entity.

"I am delighted that the Holy Spirit has led the ERLC's trustees to Dr. Russell Moore as the commission's next president," Land said.

"Dr. Moore is a godly Christian minister, a devoted husband and father, and a convictional, committed Baptist.

"His excellent academic preparation, combined with his keen mind and his tender heart for God and His people, make him a person uniquely suited to serve our Savior and Southern Baptists in this crucial role at such a critical moment in our nation's history.

"I join the trustees and ERLC staff in committing to pray for Russell and his dear family as he prepares to assume the tremendous responsibilities of the ERLC presidency," Land said.

Moore will begin his new responsibilities June 1. At that time, Land will become the entity's president emeritus, an honor bestowed on him by trustees in September.

The ERLC trustees' seven-person

presidential search committee, chaired by Barry Creamer of Criswell College in Dallas, recommended Moore to the full board after a seven-month process.

"After praying, planning, meeting and working for months to find the man we believe God would have lead the ERLC, we are blessed by the board's election of Russell Moore today and confident that God will use his message to impact churches and the public marketplace of ideas for what is right, true and desperately needed today," said Creamer,

Criswell's vice president of academic affairs.

Moore has served since 2004 as dean of the school of theology and senior vice president for academic administration at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

He joined the faculty in 2001 as professor of Christian theology and ethics and continues in that role.

He was preaching pastor at a campus of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville from 2008-12.

While a student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Moore was associate pastor at Bay Vista Baptist Church in Biloxi, Miss.

Before attending seminary, Moore served for four years as an aide to pro-life Democratic Congressman Gene Taylor of Mississippi.

Moore and his wife Maria are the parents of five sons.

Moore is a leading voice in the growing pro-adoption movement among evangelicals.

His 2009 book – *Adopted for Life: The Priority of Adoption for Christian Families and Churches* – has played a significant role in that cause, and he is a frequent speaker at adoption conferences.

On his blog ([russellmoore.com](http://russellmoore.com)), in written commentaries, in speeches and in news media interviews, Moore comments frequently on a range of issues and the Christian gospel's impact on them. These include abortion and other sanctity of life matters, race relations, marriage, pornography, politics and popular culture.

Government, academic and church leaders applauded Moore's selection in written statements.

In addition to its Nashville office, the ERLC has an office in Washington, D.C. More information on Moore, including a full list of endorsements, is available at <http://erlc.com/moorepresskit>.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Tom Strobe is the Washington bureau chief for Baptist Press.) **BR**



RUSSELL MOORE



# Setting boundaries for online sharing

Special to the Recorder

Unless you have been hiding under a very large rock, you know the popularity explosion of social media among teens. This frenzy now spans across multiple generations with people tagging, pinning, posting, and tweeting about their lives.

Social media has made our world much smaller and better in many ways. You are literally a few clicks away from connecting with a school classmate, watching your friends' children or your own grandchildren grow up hundreds of miles away. You can share your Aunt Hazel's award-winning casserole recipe with complete strangers or let everyone know what you did last weekend.

Employers and even college admissions officials are now trolling through social media sites to get the backstory about potential candidates. However, the joys of social media can quickly become clouded with confusion over knowing the right amount of personal information to share. How do you know if you are guilty of sharing TMI (too much information)?

Shakespeare wrote that discretion is the better part of valor. It seems today that discretion has lost its application somewhere in antiquity. The popularity of social media, with more than 1 billion worldwide users, has created a virtual connectedness with very few boundaries. Parents are caught in a struggle between allowing their children to grow up and protecting them from danger that they do not even know exists. Discretion must be revived to develop healthy families with a proper view of themselves and others. Proverbs 2:11 reminds us that *"discretion will watch over you, and understanding will guard you."*

But what does the word discretion really mean? "Discretion" is simply defined as the quality of behaving or speaking in such a way as to avoid social embarrassment or distress. Have you ever embarrassed yourself in public? At least that slip of the tongue or clumsy fall

happens and is usually soon forgotten. However, social media preserves your most embarrassing moments ad infinitum. That really cool picture you posted of your senior trip or that thing you did at the company party is now public domain for employers, future spouses, and your grandmother. Yes, she is online too!

So why do people feel inclined to post their most intimate details online? How can parents set appropriate boundaries for themselves as well as their children?

## Avoid the waxed fruit

I have a vivid childhood memory of a large bowl of waxed fruit sitting on my grandmother's dining room table. That bowl had some of the most delicious looking apples, grapes, and bananas you could imagine. I knew that fruit was fake, but those shiny apples proved to be an insurmountable foe and finally convinced me to take a bite one day. The result was less than pleasant and still makes me cringe whenever I see waxed fruit today.

Most of the problems we encounter in life are when we allow God's best to become substituted with a counterfeit. Consider the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, & self-control (Gal. 5:22). These are pure characteristics of Jesus, but the world offers a distorted version. To love as Jesus loved means to sacrifice your own preferences for the good of another with no expectation of receiving anything in return.

Counterfeit love means to show affection to others for selfish reasons. In other words, your motivation to help others is to feel good about yourself.

Counterfeit self-worth is at the core of much of teen culture. Youth evangelist Jeffrey Dean observes that teens are pushing the boundaries of social media in a search for significance. He sums up a common teen perspective as "I'll try whatever with whomever if you will love me forever." Discretion becomes a small price to pay in order to gain enough popularity to make a teen

feel loved. This attempt to find acceptance and self-worth has even carried over into the teen subculture.

Teens today are using the term YOLO ("You only live once") to justify adventurous and sometimes dangerous behavior both on and offline. YOLO can apply to almost anything, including driving your car too fast, buying an expensive pair of shoes at the mall, or sending racy text messages. The idea is that you are only young once so do what you want, have fun, and do not worry about tomorrow. A counterfeit. Waxed fruit.

The Psalmist declares that we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). Our worth and value are determined by God (Gen. 1:26) and demonstrated by His love for us through Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:8). The purpose of life is not simply to have fun, but to know and love God. It is true that we all have but one life to live. As Christians, we are called to live life on purpose and make every effort to advance the cause of Christ. The really cool thing is that we are not asked to go it alone. God's supernatural power enables us to be His witness wherever we go (Acts 1:8). That includes the realm of social media.

## How then shall we parent?

It is easy to get overwhelmed with the challenge of navigating social media when it comes to your teen. But the answer is found in a much broader context than just the do's and don'ts of using social media. Here are a few thoughts that will hopefully help you in the journey.

It starts with you. Parents, there is no better teacher for your children than you. Are you modeling the kind of behavior that honors God in all areas of your life—including social media?

God's design is for you to love the Lord with all your heart and then be the primary disciple maker of your children (Deut. 6:5-7). It is never too late to get started, but it is always too late to wait. Start today! Ask God to help you be the mom or dad that He intends and that your children desperately need. Let the church help but remember that it starts with you.

See Online page 16



**RYAN MASON**  
Guest column

# Creating a disciple-making culture

Mission and vision clarification are essential in organizations of every size. Unless North Carolina Baptists understand and embrace the mission and vision of this Convention there is little motivation for them to support the future direction of this Convention's ministry and missionary endeavors.

Our purpose, as stated in the Convention's bylaws, is, "to assist the churches in their divinely appointed mission." While there is great breadth in how we may assist the churches, the focus of the Convention's efforts must be upon churches. This Convention does not exist to be served by the churches, but rather the Convention exists to serve the churches. It has been my goal as I have served as your execu-

tive director-treasurer to focus the efforts of the Convention upon the churches comprising this Convention. I greatly value the institutions and agencies of this convention; however, these organizations are to function as an extension of our churches. Throughout our history, member churches have pooled their resources and funded missions through the Cooperative Program and special offerings in part to support these organizations because individual churches could not do alone what has been accomplished through our institutions and agencies.

The vision of the Convention, as endorsed by our board of directors, is a vision that I believe God placed upon my heart for this time period in our history. Simply stated, the vision is, "By

God's grace we will become the strongest force in the history of this Convention for reaching people with the message of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ." The operative term in the vision is "reaching people." There is a great need for the Convention to refine its focus in its service to its churches; therefore, the focus is upon assisting churches in reaching people. This is, without apology, evangelism, discipleship and mobilization for missions. Your convention staff is now using a term that I hope you are becoming familiar with to describe this three-fold emphasis in assisting churches: disciple-making. Please do not confuse disciple-making with discipleship. Disciple-making is the overarching effort while discipleship is one part of the larger effort. Disciple-making involves leading individuals to Christ, helping new converts grow in their faith, and engaging converts in missionary activities

where they, too, begin sharing their faith.

Disciple-making is not a program that the church can begin and complete in a specific number of weeks. Disciple-making is a process that is ongoing, ever growing, and continually changing in an effort to reach and disciple individuals through an Acts 1:8 methodology. More simply stated, our goal is to assist churches in making disciples that make disciples. If the churches of this Convention become filled with disciples, who in turn are making disciples, we will see a new culture established in the churches of this Convention; what we refer to as a disciple-making culture.

Most importantly, if the churches of this Convention develop a disciple-making culture, we will indeed become, "the strongest force in the history of this Convention for reaching people with the message of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ." **BR**



**MILTON A. HOLLIFIELD JR.**  
BSC executive  
director-treasurer



# A look behind the numbers

**N**umbers are a necessary part of life. We count the years of our life, the months of a pregnancy, the money in our bank account, the miles we drive, the points on the scoreboard, the votes a candidate receives, and reluctantly, the pounds on the scales.

Time is measured in numbers. Our bank account and social security are identified with numbers. Numbers are an essential form of communication. They tell us something.



**K. ALLAN BLUME**  
Editor

Numbers are a source of sensitivity for some. When churches count baptisms, attendance and offerings, someone will rise up in offense, complaining that numbers are “not spiritual.”

Thom Rainer, president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources, has a blog that not only offers his perspective on issues, but also provides useful facts within Southern Baptist life. In a recent blog post he shared an interesting list of all Southern Baptist (SBC) churches who reported 1,000 or more in worship attendance.

Rainer made it clear that his purpose is simply to inform, not to make qualitative comments or judgments. All of the numbers are self-reported by the churches. Some of those numbers are precise; some churches use estimated figures. If a church does not report, it is not on this list.

With approximately 46,000 SBC churches, only 1.3 percent of the churches report more than 1,000 in attendance, according to Rainer. That translates into 98.7 percent of the churches reporting their attendance under 1,000.

The trend shows people moving toward larger churches. In another blog Rainer called the concentration of people to larger churches “a clear and present reality.” He reported that while only 1.3 percent of churches report an attendance of 1,000 or more, 22.2 percent of the total denominational attendance is in these congregations.

Only 4.4 percent of the churches have an attendance of 500 or more, but 35.3 percent of the attendance of 46,000 churches is concentrated in just those few churches.

We have extracted the North Carolina churches from the national list and provided them on this page. There are 36 SBC churches in N.C. that reported 1,000 or more in attendance.

The numbers are what they are. Some comments by readers on Rainer’s blog revealed an unnecessary defen-

See Numbers page 16

## Largest Southern Baptist churches in North Carolina

N.C. ranking	National ranking	Church name, location	Weekly worship attendance
1	10	Elevation Church, Matthews	9,747
2	26	Hope Community Church, Raleigh	6,060
3	28	The Summit Church, Durham	5,750
4	39	Biltmore Baptist Church, Arden	4,839
5	48	Hickory Grove Baptist Church, Charlotte	4,255
6	69	Calvary Baptist Church, Winston-Salem	3,323
7	80	Mud Creek Baptist Church, Hendersonville	2,940
8	114	Cleveland Community Church, Clayton	2,500
9	120	First Baptist Church, Indian Trail	2,497
10	168	Carmel Baptist Church, Charlotte	2,083
11	178	Skyland Baptist Church, Kannapolis	2,006
12	179	Bethlehem Baptist Church, Gastonia	2,005
13	198	Providence Baptist Church, Raleigh	1,928
14	202	Temple Baptist Church, New Bern	1,904
15	253	First Baptist Church, Jacksonville	1,653
16	257	Scotts Hill Baptist Church, Wilmington	1,648
17	295	Richland Creek Community Church, Wake Forest	1,492
18	316	Lee Park Baptist Church, Monroe	1,404
18	316	First Baptist Church, Hendersonville	1,404
20	337	Bay Leaf Baptist Church, Raleigh	1,380
21	346	Lawndale Baptist Church, Greensboro	1,350
22	383	Green Street Baptist Church, High Point	1,273
23	384	Osborne Baptist Church, Eden	1,272
24	399	Arran Lake Baptist Church, Fayetteville	1,250
25	417	Parkwood Baptist Church, Gastonia	1,226
26	428	Faith Baptist Church, Youngsville	1,200
27	481	Western Avenue Baptist Church, Statesville	1,136
28	486	First Baptist Church, Charlotte	1,129
29	493	Village Baptist Church, Fayetteville	1,114
30	504	Englewood Baptist Church, Rocky Mount	1,105
31	508	Rich Fork Baptist Church, Thomasville	1,100
32	523	North Asheville Baptist Church, Asheville	1,094
33	526	High Rock Baptist Church, Salisbury	1,090
34	555	Life Community Church, Jamestown	1,049
35	575	Pleasant Garden Baptist Church, Pleasant Garden	1,011
36	586	Daystar Church, Greensboro	1,000

Source: *thomrainer.com* (Jan. 26, 2013)

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April 21

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

April 28

## Living in Holiness

**Focal Passages: Leviticus 18:1-5, 20-26; 20:6-8**

**M**arch Madness is gone for this season, and we have witnessed some great college basketball. Could you imagine what college basketball would be like without rules? Some may think it would be great, but once the game started, it would become mass chaos on the court. Just think if it was OK to punch someone in the stomach every time they shot the ball. Or, if it was perfectly fine to walk off the court with the ball during the middle of the game. It may be entertaining for a few moments, but it would soon turn into a complete disaster.

The rules of basketball or any other sport are there for the safety of the players and to maximize the enjoyment of the game. The same is true in other areas of life as well. Stop signs are put in place for the safety of the public and facilitate a good driving experience. Speed limits are used to minimize high-speed collisions while providing an adequate driving experience to the car owner. The point is that rules and ordinances are ideally

put in place to provide the safest and best living experience as possible.

In a similar way, God has provided rules and statutes for the well-being of His people. There are many individuals that may read Leviticus 18-20 and think that God's holiness requires too much from His people. They think God's rules stifle the fun in life and become a heavy burden to the follower. Actually, the reverse is true. God gives his people rules because He wants the very best for them. He wants to maximize the long-term enjoyment and satisfaction because as John Piper has said, "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him." God knows that apart from holy living all roads lead to destruction; that reckless living does not satisfy the heart, but will ultimately destroy a person's life.

How do you view God's rules and statutes? Do you see them as a burden or do you see them as an act of God's kindness and mercy?



**BARTLEY WOOTEN**  
Senior pastor, Beulaville Baptist Church, Beulaville

**Focal Passages: Leviticus 26:3-13, 40-42, 45**

**I**n Leviticus 26, God promises three blessings for those who walk in His statutes. They include: fruitfulness, His continual presence and restoration. Each of these blessings is contingent on us walking in holiness.

In the first blessing God promises to provide a fruitful harvest (26:3-10). In Israel's day the need for rain was crucial for the fields and trees to yield its fruit. God promised Israel if they would walk in statutes He would provide the rain and the fruit would come in its season. The New Testament has a parallel thought for those who walk with the Lord. Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from you can do nothing" (John 15:5 ESV).

In the second blessing, God promises His continued presence among those

who walk in His ways (26:11-13). Unlike the pagan gods of Israel's day, God promised to be with his people if they obeyed His commands. That promise is still true today. The scripture says that Jesus will never leave you nor forsake you (Hebrews 13:5).

Third, God promises restoration for those who find themselves in sin and under God's discipline if they will repent and confess it to Him (26:40-42, 45). I experienced the reality of this promise many years ago in my early 20's. As a Christian I wanted to have things my way and walked in a season of disobedience. God, in His mercy, disciplined me. There were several months where I felt I was in a spiritual quarantine. As I repented of my sin, God spoke to my heart through His Word. This is what He said, "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields a peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Heb. 12:11). After reading that passage, I knew God loved me enough to discipline me that I might enjoy His very best for my life.

Do you want God's blessings? If so, it starts with walking in holiness.

April 21

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

April 28

## Be Strong in God's Work

**Focal Passages: 2 Timothy 2:1-10, 14-15, 22-26**

**W**hen Denver Bronco's president John Elway made the decision to pay Peyton Manning \$96 million for five years to be their quarterback, I was skeptical. In 2011 Manning had a series of neck operations. He spent a whole year rehabbing, and the Indianapolis Colts believed it was in their best interests to let Manning go. Until the serious neck injury, Peyton Manning had never missed a start as a NFL quarterback. He missed the entire 2011-12 season, however, and at the age of 35, one wondered if Manning could complete one more game, much less five years. Here is what we know about Peyton Manning: Peyton Manning has a strong, disciplined work ethic; he says that the Lord is his No. one priority in life; he believes in himself; and he understands the position of quarterback like no one else. Peyton Manning knows the definition of the word "strength."

Paul uses three illustrations from real life to describe the qualities of a strong leader. The first is from the military (v.

3-4). The good soldier expects hardships and focuses on his mission above his personal desires. The second is the athlete (v. 5). He is not crowned unless he wins competing according to the rules. He can't run outside his lane; he can't shove his opponents down; and he can't use performance-enhancing drugs. The third is the farmer (v. 6). Farmers have a reputation for being hard-working. Because of their many sacrifices, they have a right to benefit from their harvest.

Perhaps verse 15 is the best summary statement for this lesson. I'd highly recommend this verse for memorization. Here is how it might read amplified: "Do your best, be diligent, make every effort to present yourself to God as one stamped with His approval, a faithful worker who has no cause to ever be ashamed of Christ, who correctly preaches and teaches the scriptures." Paul wanted Timothy to be focused in his work, but to also make sure he built a strong team to help him (v. 2).



**WAYNE PROCTOR**  
Pastor, Eureka Baptist Church

**Focal Passage: 2 Timothy 3:1-17**

**T**he famous Chinese Christian teacher, author and leader, Watchman Nee, wrote the following story in The Normal Christian Life. While on retreat, Mr. Nee led a husband and wife to a salvation experience with Christ. Nee told the husband that the Holy Spirit would open the scriptures for him so he could live like Jesus. Winter was approaching, however, and Mr. Nee had to return to Shanghai. Now, before becoming a believer, the man's habit during the long, harsh winter months was drinking substantial amounts

of wine with his meals, often leading to drunkenness. As a new Christian, the man was conflicted. Should he continue drinking wine with his meals? As a means of discernment, the man tried to pray before his meal, and no words would come from his mind or mouth. His wife thought him foolish and told him to go ahead and drink the wine. It wouldn't

hurt. The man, however, chose to listen to the Spirit rather than his wife. God was directing the man to the Bible, and when he read the Bible, he was convinced that his former habit of excessive drinking was not good. He told his wife to take the wine away. Some months later the man was able to visit Watchman Nee in Shanghai.

He told the great teacher what he had learned. In Chinese he said, "Brother Nee, Resident Boss wouldn't let me drink!" Mr. Nee said, "Very good. You always listen to Resident Boss!"

Watchman Nee often wrote about the difference between the natural man and the godly man. The difference is how we listen to and obey God. In verses 1-9 we have an extensive description of the ungodly man. At least 18 characteristics or manifestations are listed. Timothy is warned to avoid such people; don't let them have leadership in the church. The godly man knows, relies upon and follows scripture. Verse 16 tells us that "all" scripture is God-breathed. The Bible will teach, rebuke, correct and train the Christian in right thinking, believing and living.



## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

### Pastor

Fishing Creek Baptist Church of Wilkesboro, NC, is seeking a **full-time pastor** with more than five years pastoral experience and is a graduate from a Bible college. The ideal candidate should have the following qualities: be a God-called man, a gifted teacher who enables persons to learn and understand deep spiritual truths, an effective communicator of well-prepared sermons, a person with personal vision and a well-developed vision for the future of the church, and a skilled counselor available to assist persons with personal and spiritual problems. Interested candidates should submit resumes to Fishing Creek Baptist Church, C/O Robert Stone, 4039 NC Hwy 16 S, Moravian Falls, NC 28654. We request that resumes be received by May 18, 2013.

Lighthouse Baptist Church seeks **full-time Senior Pastor**. Founded in 2004, a "come as you are" 300+ members church, desiring to introduce imperfect people to a perfect God. We offer one traditional and one contemporary Sunday morning service, with emphasis on strong biblical teaching and evangelism. Candidates must meet qualifications provided in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9; be an expository preacher of the Word with ability to teach accurately and powerfully. Must be a servant leader in agreement with Southern Baptist teachings. Master's degree desirable, experience considered in lieu of a degree with minimum of 5 years pastoral experience preferred. Must demonstrate godly leadership with church staff and committees. Must be a people person and have a pastor's love for the body of Christ and desire to build relationships; one on one as well as congregationally. Must reside within a 400 mile radius of Sylva. Send resumes to Tom Collins, PO Box 454, Webster, NC 28788 or [lbcsearchcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:lbcsearchcommittee@gmail.com).

Laurel Springs Baptist Church, near Boone, NC, seeks **full-time Pastor** to serve our congregation and community. Resumes may be submitted to: Pastor Search Committee, Laurel Springs Baptist Church, 7504 US HWY 421 South, Deep Gap, NC 28618, or by email to [lsbcpastorsearch@gmail.com](mailto:lsbcpastorsearch@gmail.com). For more information visit [www.laurelspringsbaptist.com](http://www.laurelspringsbaptist.com).

Moderate Baptist church seeks **Pastor** who is evangelistic minded, Bible believing and has a servant spirit to minister to a congregation with a vision. Masters in divinity and 5 years or more pastoral experience required. Send resume to First Baptist Church, 2600 Rouse Road, Kinston, NC 28504, or [gordonelucas@yahoo.com](mailto:gordonelucas@yahoo.com).

**Pastor.** Godwin Heights Baptist Church of Lumberton, NC, is seeking a full-time pastor with five or more years of ministry experience and who holds a seminary degree or a Master of Divinity Degree. The ideal candidate should have the following qualities: an effective communicator and preacher who works well with the church family and community; a strong leader who promotes a spiritual interest of the church; and a caring individual who is gifted in pastoral care. Interested candidates should submit resumes to: Pastor Search Committee, Godwin Heights Baptist Church, 704 Godwin Avenue, Lumberton, NC 28358. Position opened until filled.

### Church Staff

**Minister of Students.** Full time, ministry experience preferred. Abbotts Creek Missionary Baptist Church is seeking a godly individual who can challenge young people in their growth and development. A strong vision for God's work and missions are essential. Bachelors degree preferred. Email resume to [secretary@abbottscreek.org](mailto:secretary@abbottscreek.org) or mail to: Abbotts Creek Missionary Baptist Church, 2817 Abbotts Creek Church Road, High Point, NC 27265.

Lake Lynn Baptist Church is seeking a **Part-time Youth Pastor**. Please send resumes to 3363 Gillespie St., Fayetteville, NC 28306, or email them to [lakelynnbaptistchurch@embarqmail.com](mailto:lakelynnbaptistchurch@embarqmail.com). Please submit resumes by May 1.

**Student Pastor.** Christ Community Church of Huntersville, North Carolina, is searching for a full-time student pastor. The candidate should have a personal relationship with Christ, a demonstration of strong Christian character, a clear calling to ministry, and strong communication skills. They should also demonstrate the ability to work well with staff members, volunteer leadership and parents of youth. Candidates should have a bachelor's degree from an accredited Bible college or eight years of ministry experience.

FBC seeks a **full-time Student Pastor** to lead middle/high-school students in ministry. Our church is positioned among some 600,000 people in the tri-state area. This individual should have a calling to the ministry and a desire to work with young people. Please send resume, cover letter, and video (if available) to Dr. Clint Scott, Senior Pastor at [cscott@fbcde.com](mailto:cscott@fbcde.com).

Fraley Memorial Baptist Church, Gastonia, NC, is seeking a **full-time youth minister**. We are SBC affiliated and affirm the Baptist Faith and Message. Approx. 30k annual compensation. Job description and belief statements are posted at [fraleymemorial.com](http://fraleymemorial.com). Send resumes to Search Team, PO Box 775 Lowell, NC 28098, or [office@fraleymemorial.com](mailto:office@fraleymemorial.com).

Neel Road Baptist Church in Salisbury, NC, is seeking a current seminary student or a recent seminary graduate to serve as **Minister of Student and Family Life**. Visit [neelroad.org](http://neelroad.org) to learn more.

Mingo Baptist Church, Dunn NC, seeks **full-time youth pastor** to lead and coordinate the youth and children's ministry. Interested candidates should be ordained or seeking ordination. College and/or seminary training helpful. Resumes sent to Rev. Louis Strickland, 1465 Mingo Church Road, Dunn, NC or [mingosbc@intrstar.net](mailto:mingosbc@intrstar.net).

Ridge Road Baptist Church in Raleigh, NC, seeks **part-time Minister of Music**. Requirements and job description at [www.rrbch.com](http://www.rrbch.com). Resumes accepted thru April 15 at [music@rrbch.com](mailto:music@rrbch.com).

Springfield Baptist Church in Springfield, Tenn., is seeking a **full-time leader of music and worship**. The worship leader will be responsible for planning and conducting worship services, directing various choirs, praise team and instrumentalists. Our worship services are a blend of traditional and contemporary music. A bachelor's degree in music is required. A master's degree is preferred. Please send all resumes to Springfield Baptist Church, Music Search Committee, 400 North Main Street, Springfield, TN 37172. Please include a recent worship service DVD. Emails may be sent to: [bethbohler05@gmail.com](mailto:bethbohler05@gmail.com).

### Denomination

The *Biblical Recorder* has an opening for a **full-time circulation manager**. The ideal candidate must be oriented to details, gifted in administration, have computer experience and possess excellent people skills. Basic accounting & database experience are valuable. Please send resume to [editor@brnow.org](mailto:editor@brnow.org) or Editor, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512.

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Cost for Baptist churches/organizations is \$1.20 per word, number and stand-alone initial (\$1.42 for commercial and non-Baptist entities) with a minimum charge of \$35. Classifieds also are carried online.



# Online

Continued from page 12

## Don't be 'creeping'

A few years ago the term “helicopter parent” was coined to describe a parent that constantly hovers over their children. This type of parenting is sometimes in response to a past experience with absentee parents or just a desire to be involved, but the results are rarely positive. Today, teens may use the word “creeping” to describe this type of parenting. If you want to undermine the relationship you have with your teen, then make sure you comment on every status, picture, and video that they post. Better yet, go ahead and post those embarrassing baby pictures and tell all your online friends about your teen’s most awkward growing-up moments.

The purpose of parenting is not to embarrass your children but to train them in Christian living and release them as light-bearers into the world. The apostle Paul reminds us of our purpose when he writes, “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). Trust starts early. It has been said that trust is the highest form of leadership. The same can be said of parenting. Do your children know that they can trust you? Trust begins early in a child’s life and includes unconditional love expressed with appropriate boundaries.

The current generation is exposed to more destructive influences than any other in history, yet the trust factor remains true – maybe even more so – today. Teens need to know that they can trust their parents to set healthy boundaries around their lives. Parents are absolutely called to be protectors of their children, even with social media. The pressure for teens to test boundaries is just as real as the temptation for parents to hover overhead. Social media is the new venue that

makes sharing our lives with the world only a click away. This is an exciting new reality, but left unchecked it can pose many serious threats.

Parents need to remember their biblical role as protector and primary disciple-maker for their children. This includes learning all you can about social media and being active in your teen’s life online as well as offline. Here are a few markers to help raise godly teens and get the best from social media:

- Give unconditional love and support to your teen.
- Help them understand that their worth comes from God (not their friends).
- Always choose to be their parent first and friend second.
- Protect with healthy boundaries.
- Be an example of a Christ-follower. Avoid, “Do as I say and not as I do.”
- Tell your daughters that you love them and they are beautiful.
- Tell your sons often that you love them and are proud of them.
- Discuss Internet safety and the consequences of “no discretion.”
- Brainstorm together ways to advance the cause of Christ through social media-without being obnoxious!
- Lighten up. It’s okay to have fun and be yourself online but use discretion!
- Live by this rule: Never post anything online you wouldn’t want your grandmother to see! *“Teach me good judgment and discernment, for I rely on your commands.” Psalm 119:66*

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Ryan Mason serves as minister of education at Hillcrest Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas. This article appeared in the February 2013 issue of Parenting Teens, a LifeWay family magazine.) **BR**

# Break

Continued from page 1



Mollie Jones spoke during the North Carolina Baptist Missions Conference April 5-6 at Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. The April 27 issue will include full coverage of the event.

more than “1,000 nails.”

“I’m not exaggerating,” she said. “For four or five hours. ... We were pulling nails for the Lord.”

The experience for many of the students will change their lives, said Billy Layton, project leader for the N.C. Baptist Men’s team.

“These students have chosen to come and serve instead of going to the beach or to the mountains or to the Caribbean or wherever,” he said. “That’s very touching to me.”

Another collegiate team worked with Southern Baptist’s Disaster Relief ministry in Staten Island.

Donning protective suits, gloves, boots and masks, a Baptist Campus Ministry contingent from the University of the Cumberlands, the Baptist-affiliated university in Williamsburg, Ky., also tore out insulation, pulled up mold-infested floors and hauled mud and sewage from basements of homes flooded by the hurricane’s storm surge.

“Anything dirty, we jumped into it,” said David Dierken, a co-leader with his wife Christen.

Cumberlands’ freshman Brian Stills, 19, – on his first mission trip – said he was humbled by the devastation and loss that people suffered. He and others worked three days doing mud-out and cleanup on a flooded home less than a mile from

the ocean.

The homeowner, a mother with two teenage daughters, was emotional when they met her.

“To see how little we did and to see how it touched somebody instantly slapped me in the face,” Stills said, while 18-year-old team member Angelica Williams was stirred by how the woman “almost cried before we lifted a finger. The house was just floors, beams and a roof when we walked in. There was nothing inside.”

Most teams went non-stop through the long days, from a 6 a.m. wakeup until bedtime at 11 p.m.

“It was exhausting,” said graduate student Christen Dierken. If they started to grow weary during the day, the 24-year-old Dierken said they would look to volunteer Ralph Payson, a 68-year-old Staten Islander, for inspiration.

Payson, a New York Fire Department retiree, helped supervise the Kentucky team’s efforts and worked beside them. Payson has worked closely with Baptist volunteers since the storm ravaged his hometown last October. Payson helped set up the tent city – temporary home for the students – on the grounds of Zion Lutheran Church.

“All these kids are great to take their vacation to come here and help my neighbors,” Payson said.

Noticing only bricks left from a home strewn in a flooded field while he walked through one of the neighborhoods the group worked in, David Dierken said Isaiah 40:8 in Scripture stuck with him all week. “All the stuff that we think is permanent, like a house, can be taken away in the blink of an eye,” he said. “What’s really left after that is God’s Word.”

For more information or to volunteer go to [baptistsonmission.org](http://baptistsonmission.org) or call (800) 395-5102, ext. 5599. **BR**

# Numbers

Continued from page 13

siveness as though the statistics are an attack on churches who do not show up in the list. It is unnecessary to criticize Rainer for giving us the facts.

For the record, surely we understand that this list does not express a value judgment of any church’s spiritual temperature. The list does not express the superiority of one church over another. It is a list of numbers. Every number represents people for whom Christ died. Every number represents someone who is hearing the gospel in a Baptist congregation.

Attendance figures are not the total picture of a church. It would be interest-

ing to know how many of these churches lead the way in church planting and disciple making. What is the giving record of the largest churches – to Cooperative Program, Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong mission offerings, and other mission causes? Only 9 of these 36 churches were in the top 20 churches in N.C. in Lottie Moon gifts last year. The other 11 churches who led in Lottie Moon gifts demonstrated significantly higher giving ratios.

A list of the top 50 N.C. churches in baptisms last year shows 26 churches from Rainer’s list are leading the state in baptisms as well as attendance. Con-

versely, 24 of the churches who lead in baptisms are not our largest churches. Their baptism ratio runs higher than the larger churches.

Some on the list of 36 have loose connections with Southern Baptists; some have strong involvement with us. Every church’s level of participation is unique by their own choice. That’s the way Baptists work.

It would be interesting if we had information on the economic and cultural diversity of our churches. Without question Baptists are very diverse and reach out to a broad spectrum of people.

Can we rejoice with the good things

God is doing in every Bible believing church that strives to reach people, to make disciples and to glorify God? I hope so. I am excited to see churches of every size serving, worshiping, giving, going, teaching and reaching for God’s glory.

There is much to do to fulfill the Great Commission. Churches cannot be cloned to fit one size and one style. We need all kinds. “For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another” Romans 12:4-5, NKJ. **BR**